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LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

LOS ANGELES COUNTY HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

A summary and update of selected California legislation with potential implications for Human Relations/Rights, introduced in the 1975/1976 SESSION OF THE STATE LEGISLATURE

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EDUCATION

SB 1737 (Dunlap) Intermediate and Secondary Education

Incorporates recommendations from the RISE Commission (Reform of Intermediate and Secondary Education). Recognizes that each student is entitled to learn, grow and develop in an individualized manner. Requires development of learner standards, and minimum standards of student competence in English and mathematics. Provides for a system of state evaluation of the program and apportionment of planning grants by the Superintendent of Public Instruction. Passed Senate. In assembly Education Committee.

AB 3409 (Hart) Decentralization

Would require shcool districts with an average daily attendance of 10,000 or more to designate as decentralized schools at least 20% of the schools under its jurisdiction and to delegate to the principal or instructional staff, or both, of each such school certain functions and duties, to include: hiring of certificated employees and instructional aides; expenditure of school-site discretionary funds; development of curriculum with involvement of parents and students in secondary schools. In Assembly Education Committee.

AB 4273 (Vasconcellos) Educational Goals

Requires the State Department of Education to establish, maintain, and supervise a statewide process for setting and collecting educational goals for elementary and secondary schools. In Assembly Education Committee.

AB 4172 (Chacon) Bi-Lingual Education

Would repeal existing Bi-Lingual Education Act and enact a new comprehensive body of law regarding bi-lingual education. Major provisions include: adoption of implementing regulations by the State Board of Education by January 1, 1977; requirement that school districts undertake a census of limited or non-English speaking students; districts with fewer than 10 limited or non-English speaking students would be required to reimburse the parents of such students for the cost of enrolling such students in private school; permit local agencies providing child development programs and having a prescribed percentage of limited or non-english speaking children, to provide bi-lingual instruction, using State or Federal funds. In Assembly Education Committee.

AB 3947 (Hart) Student Discipline

Would require that suspension of a student by preceded by a conference between school officials, the student and his or her parents, except in emergency situations constituting a clear and present danger to the lives, safety or health of students or school personnel. Passed Senate. In Senate Education Committee.

AB 1267 (Egeland) Corporal Punishment

Prohibits the administration of corporal punishment to any pupil without prior written approval of the parent. Such approval will be valid for the school year in which it is submitted. Became effective January 1, 1976.

EMPLOYMENT

AB 3124 (Dixon)

Changes the name of the State Fair Employment Practices Commission to California Civil Rights Commission. Restructures the agency to permit greater latitude, flexibility and coordination in dealing with discrimination in employment and housing. Strengthens the enforcement of employment opportunity laws and affirmative action capability. For example, the Commission or the Division of Civil Rights is authorized to initiate enforcement actions when the general purposes of the Act are being violated. Also permits delegation of authority and responsibility to appropriate local governmental agencies, such as city and county Human Relations/Rights commissions. Passed Assembly. Scheduled for hearing/Senate Industrial Relations Committee in August.

AB 3729 (Alatorre) Fair Employment Practices

Prohibits employment discrimination because of age (35-65) or marital status. Increases from one year to two years the time allowed for filing a complaint alleging an unlawful employment practice. Would establish a committee whose actions are subject to review by the State Fair Employment Practice Commission, to examine affirmative action and equal employment opportunity program of apprenticeship sponsors, and of persons contracting the the State and supplying goods and services to the State. In Assembly Committee on Labor Relations.

SB 2159 (Robbins) Fair Employment Practices

Appropriates an unspecified amount to the State Fair Employment Practices Commission for the purpose of enabling the Commission to increase staff and materials to pursue employment discrimination complaints within its jurisdiction. In Senate Industrial Relations Committee.

HOUSING

AB 3124 (Dixon) -- See Summary Under Employment

Defines full scope and responsibilities of the new Commission and Divison of Civil Rights with regard to housing. Changes relating to housing not as extensive as those concerning employment, but include authority to initiate enforcement actions for violation of fair housing laws. Passed Assembly. Scheduled for hearing/Senate Industrial Relations Committee in August.

AB 2594 (Hughes) Redlining

Would amend the Rumford Fair Housing Act (which currently prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, religion, national origin, sex, marital status or ancestry) to include prohibition of discrinination in the provision of financial assistance to creditworthy persons for the "purchase, construction, rehabilitation, improvement, or relocation of housing accommodations," because such accommodations are located within a certain geographical area. Passed Assembly, in Senate Local Government Committee.

SB 1810 (Gregorio) SB 1997 (Zenovich) AB 4301 (Chacon) Housing and Community Development

These bills are designed to make changes effecting the operation of the State Housing Finance Agency. They would revise existing provisions in the law relating to financing and loan insurance assistance in certain deteriorated residential areas, and areas which lack available mortgage financing. SB 1810 and SB 1997 passed the Senate and are in the Assembly Housing and Community Development Committee. AB 4301 passed the Assembly. In Senate Committee on Local Government.

JUVENILE JUSTICE

AB 3121 (Dixon)

This is considered this year's major juvenile justice reform legislation and incorporates provisions of several other bills. It provides for jail detention and prosecution in adult cour of 16- and 17-year-old repeat offenders accused of specified crimes (violent felonies); District Attorney would act as presecutor in specified serious crimes; proposes substantially different treatment for "status offenders" such as runaways and truants. The thrust of the bill as expressed in proposed revisions of the purposes of juvenile court law, is to "protect the public from criminal conduct by minors and to impose on a minor a sense of responsibility for his own act." Passed Assembly -- to be heard by Senate Judiciary Committee.

SB 1598 (Robbins)

Similar to AB 3121 (above). Provides even harsher approach by giving arresting officer the power to jail and handle as adults 16- and 17-year-old first offenders accused of certain crimes. Passed Senate. In Assembly Criminal Justice Committee.

A series of bills by Assemblyman Sieroty AB 3894-99, dealing with revisions in the juvenile court law ranging from specialized treatment of non-delinquents to granting minors the right to a hearing before a judge rather than a referee, all died in committee. However, the provisions of several were amended into AB 3121 (above) as were the major provisions of AB 2672 (Torres) making numerous procedural changes in juvenile court law, including giving probation officers broad discretion in establishing shelter care facilities.

STATUS OF WOMEN

The following legislation was effective January 1, 1976:

AB 299 (Vasconcellos) would appropriate $200,000 for campus child development centers and revise operational provisions.

AB 181 (Berman) would strengthen the existing credit law by prohibiting the denial of credit to anyone regardless of sex or marital status and includes spousal and child support payments within the definition of property and earnings. Makes an intentional violation of this law liable for civil penalty of $2,500 for each violation.

AB 372 (Hart) would allow male and female prisoners in county jails to be together for certain acitivities such as eating, recreation, vocational training, etc.

AB 1060 (Berman) would allow employees of school districts to determine the length of pregnancy leaves of absence with their physicians, and authorizes the FEPC to enforce a prohibition against discrimination on the basis of pregnancy.

AB 1559 (Wornum) would require public school districts to apportion funds on an equitable basis for athletic programs.

SB 844 (Petris) would extend the provisions of the Rumford Fair Housing Act to prohibit discrimination based on sex and marital status; this Act already prohibits discrimination based on race, color, religion, national origin or ancestry.

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